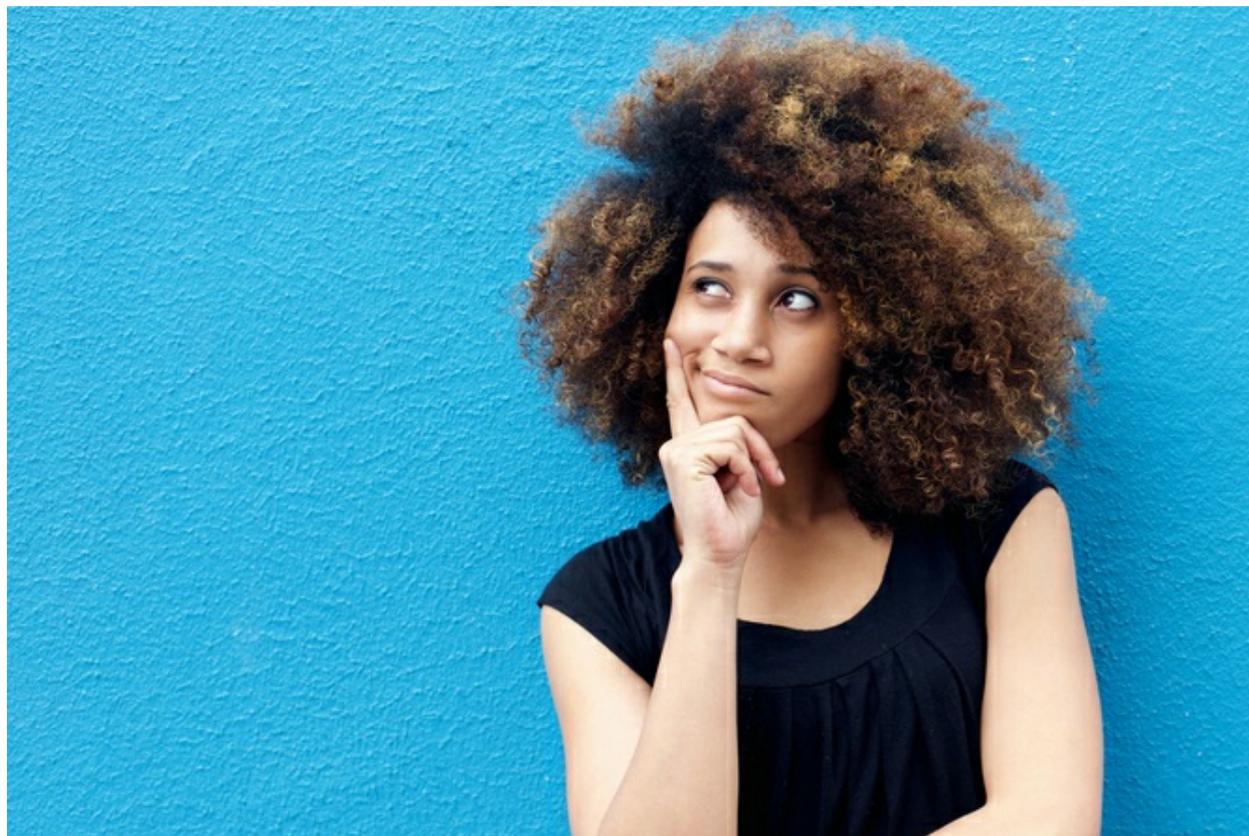


# Six Important Myths and Facts about Child Support

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Today's blog looks at some important myths and facts involving child support payments.

**Myth #1:** In most cases, a single parent bears the burden of child support.

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**Fact:** In most cases, both parents have a financial responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of their children. How that responsibility is shared is decided by the court. Even if one parent never pays a penny to the other parent, that does not release them from their duty to provide for the needs of their children. ***The court considers income and other factors when determining parental responsibilities for support.***

**Myth #2:** I don't work (or plan to quit this job), so I should not be expected to pay support.

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**Fact:** In most jurisdictions, ***parents remain accountable for support payments whether they are unemployed or decide to leave their job on a voluntary basis.*** Quitting a job to reduce income is not an excuse for ignoring court-ordered payments. Although there may be exceptions for those who incur disabilities or are unable to find work, you should ***explain your situation to the court*** Deferrals may be granted and penalties assessed for

delayed payments. **Never assume** that a parent can reduce their support payments by voluntarily lowering their income. **Failure to pay court-ordered support may lead to criminal penalties, including jail time.**

**Myth #3: I share custody, so I should not have to pay support since I cover the expenses when the children are with me.**

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**Fact:** The court determines custody as well as the financial obligations of parents to support their children. The court considers both physical custody (“parenting time”) and legal custody (ability for parents to make responsible decisions about their children) when determining joint custody. Even in situations where custody is shared equally, the court may require one parent to pay child support to the other parent. **Each situation is unique.**

**Myth #4: The payment I am expected to make is arbitrary.**

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**Fact:** Each state establishes guidelines for determining child support. Utah Code applies the “income shares model” when determining the amount and responsibility of payments. **This model calculates child support payments based upon the amount of money the parents would have spent on the child proportionally if the family remained intact.** There are numerous factors that affect the calculation, including income levels and whether the other parent lives in a different jurisdiction.

**Myth #5: Child support from my ex should cover all expenses.**

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**Fact:** The purpose of child support is for parents to share the financial responsibility for their children. However, if one parent unilaterally decides to take a child on an expensive vacation, send them to band camp, or buy lots of new games and toys, that does not mean the costs of those items will be shared equally. Court-mandated payments **may not** necessarily provide the funds necessary to cover all expenses.

**Myth #6: My support payments are set in stone and will never change.**

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**Fact:** The court sets the payments to **meet the needs of the children**. Those needs **may change** as children grow older. Also, **parents may request a review of payment** levels as circumstances change. Courts have the ability to adjust payment amounts and proportional responsibilities. The wellbeing of the children should be the heart of the issue, and the shared responsibility for providing support should put the children first.

**Salt Lake City, Utah Child Support Attorney David Pedrazas Can Help**

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David Pedrazas is an experienced attorney in Salt Lake City, Utah that assists clients going through a divorce. The Law Office of David Pedrazas helps parents understand the court’s standards for calculating and determining child support. Contact our office if you have

questions and schedule a ***free 30-minute consultation***. Give us a call at **801-263-7078** today.